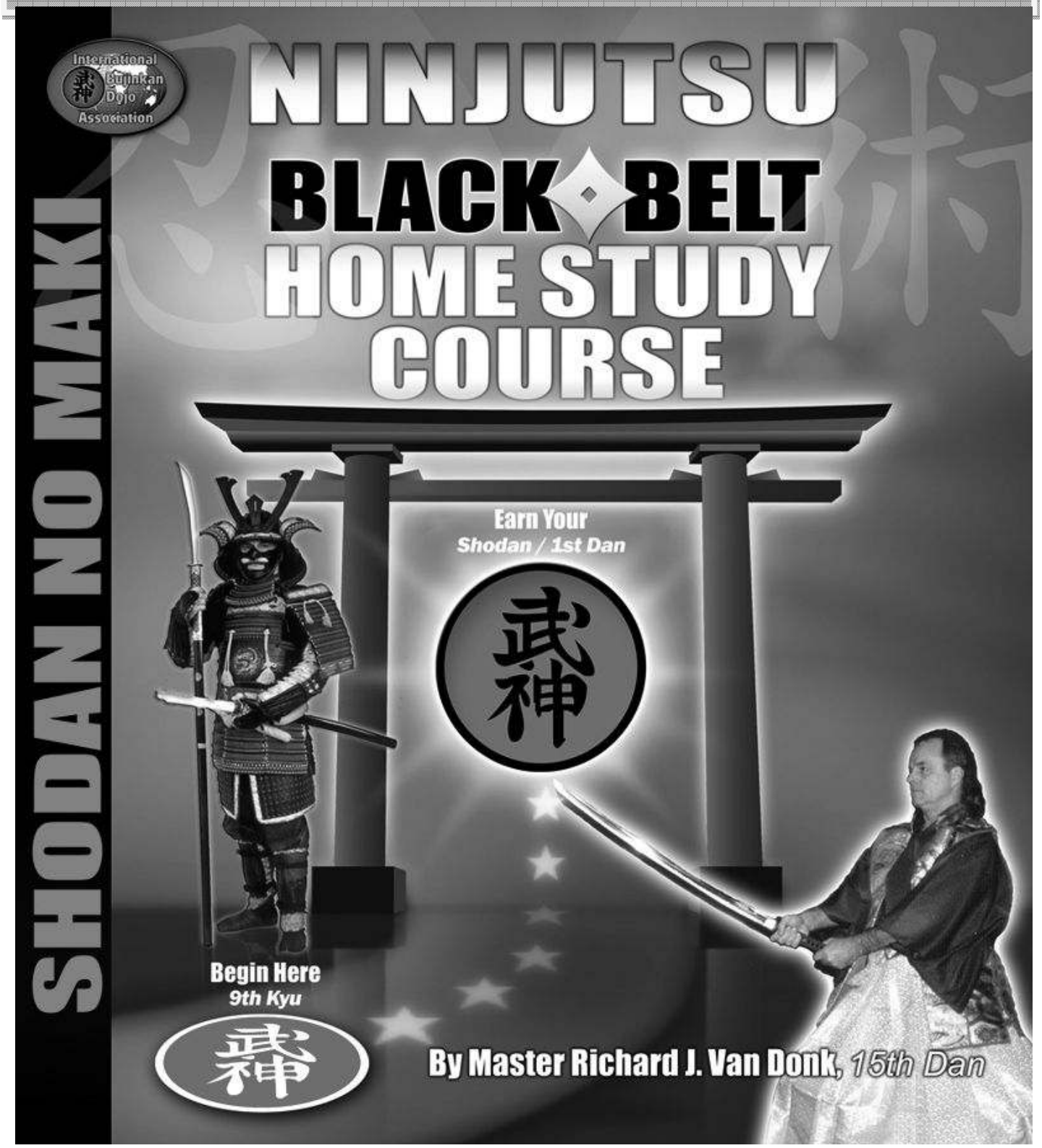
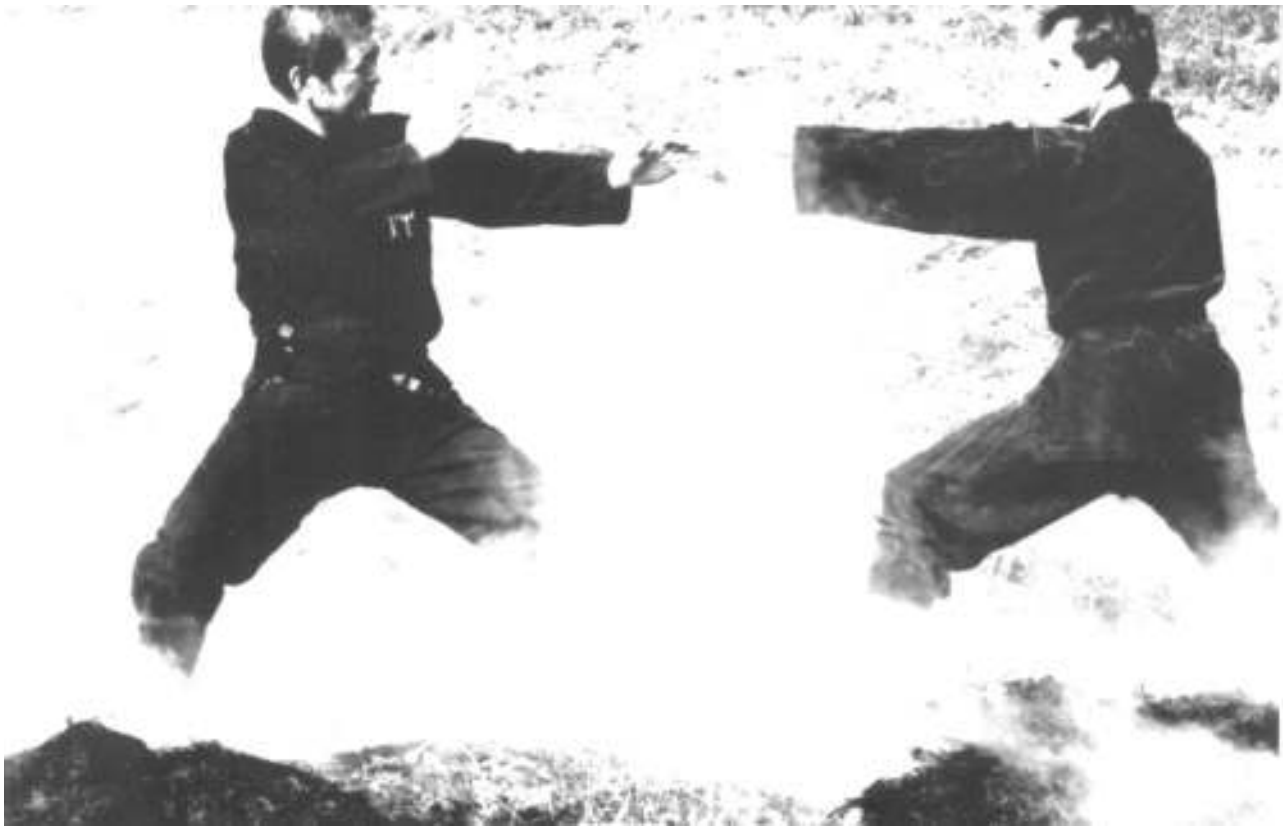
# HISTORY OF NINJUTSU





Soke Masaaki Hatsumi and Richard Van Donk
During a magazine photo shoot for Ninja Fighting Star Magazine - 1986

History

# International Bujinkan Dojo Association Genealogy

Togakure Ryu
Gyokko Ryu
Koto Ryu
Shinden Fudo Ryu
Gyokushin Ryu
Kumogakure Ryu

Kukishinden Ryu
Gikan Ryu

Takagi Yoshin Ryu
Taught by Ishitani
Passed by
**Mizuta Yoshitaro Tadafusa**

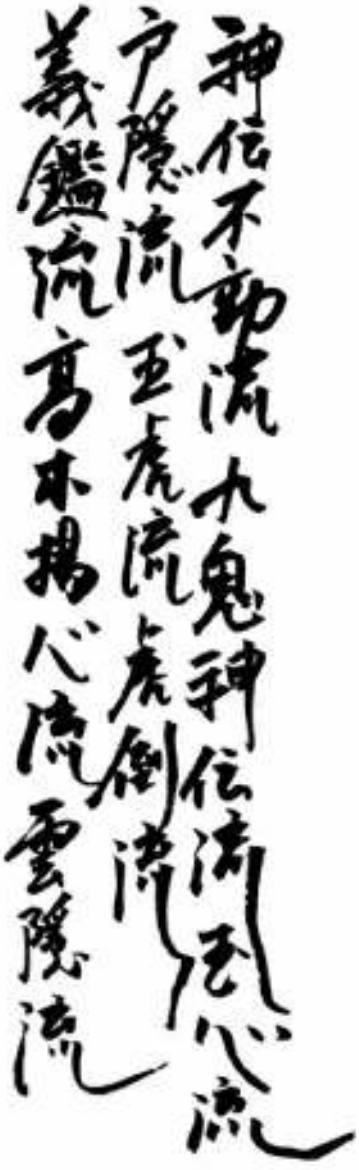
**Shinryuken Masamitsu Toda**
(1824-1909)

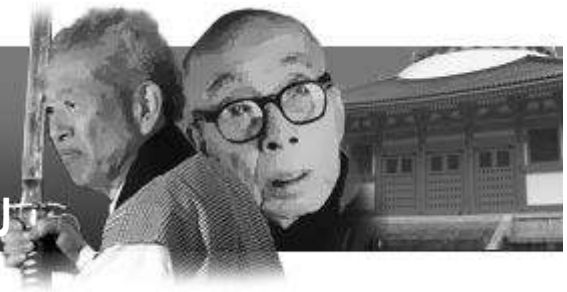
**Matsutaro Takekage Ishitani**
(Approx. death 1911)

**Toshigatsu Takamatsu**
(1887-1972)

**Soke Masaaki Hatsumi**
(b. 1931)

**Shihan Richard Van Donk**
(b.1950)





# BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW
# INTRODUCTION OF BUJINKAN NINPO TAIJUTSU

The true name of the art that we study is "***Bujinkan Budo Taijutsu***" (formerly called Ninpo) which is often abbreviated simply as "Ninjutsu." The word "***Bujinkan***" may be broken down into three different components: "***Bu***" meaning Martial; "***Jin***" meaning Spirit; and "***Kan***" meaning Warrior Training Hall. So the Bujinkan is a place where people can meet and train to develop themselves in the martial spirit.

The word ***Ninpo*** may also be broken into its two separate components: "***Nin***" meaning Perseverance and "***Po***" meaning Philosophy or Direction. So Ninpo is basically the philosophy of persevering in life, no matter what obstructions may occur.

"***Taijutsu***" may also be broken down into two components: "***Tai***" meaning Body and "***Jutsu***" meaning Skill or Technique. Taijutsu is therefore the art of using the whole body and learning to do it skillfully.

Lastly, ***Dojo*** may also be broken down into two components: "***Do***" meaning the Way or Path, and "***Jo***" meaning place.

Training both inside and outside of the school is a fundamental necessity to training in NinpoTaijutsu. Many techniques, drills, variations, and explorations of applications are covered in the training sessions and much of this skill is almost impossible to learn on one's own without guidance. This is why you must continually seek training from a licensed Bujinkan Instructor, as all of your instructors have done before you and still do today.

Although there are many books written on the subject of Ninjutsu, there are but a few legitimate sources of knowledge on the subject. Bushindo University will offer most works that are worth studying. Shihan Van Donk will give you advice on what some of the merits and drawbacks of each publication are, but in short it is recommended that any member or instructor of Bujinkan Budo Taijutsu familiarize themselves with the following publications:

- **Any books or videos by Soke Masaaki Hatsumi**
- **IBDA *Source* Newsletter Articles online at www.ninjutsu.com**
- **All Bujinkan related material from Soke Hatsumi or Shihan Van Donk.**

Get a good and proper education from our sources for they are the most authentic available, coming directly from the Grandmaster in Japan. Be sure to thoroughly check out others who make claims yet have not done the studies themselves. There are many licensed Shihan instructors around the world and our website at www.ninjutsu.com has a recommended list that you can trust. Work with different training partners so you have experience with different body types. Most importantly, put what you learn in your training to use in your everyday life *outside* the training hall. Train yourself to pay more attention to your surroundings. You must learn to sense what is around you, both inanimate objects and other people. You must purposefully train your mind & body and open your heart in order to learn this art correctly. And above all, have a great time while you are learning. If it hurts too much or you are getting frustrated you are doing it wrong.

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NINJA

The following pages contain a brief history of some of the ryus (schools) that can be glimpsed from history books and writings. For a more detailed explanation see “History of the Schools of the Bujinkan” by Paul Richardson from which these were extracted.

## IGA RYU NINJUTSU

In 1049, Ikai, a Chinese warlord from Shitio, in China, fought with the warlord of So province. Ikai was defeated and made his escape to Ise in Japan. Here he lived and taught what would eventually evolve into Ninjutsu. He had two students, Fujiwara no Chikada (also known as Gamon Gouji), and Hogenbo Tesshin. What he taught them were the eighteen fundamental Chinese arts.

The Eighteen fundamental arts are as follows :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Seishinteki Kyoyo | Spiritual refinement |
| 2. | Taijutsu | Unarmed combat |
| 3. | Bikenjutsu | Swordsmanship |
| 4. | Sojutsu | Spear fighting |
| 5. | Naginatajutsu | Halberd fighting |
| 6. | Bisentojutsu | Large halberd fighting |
| 7. | Kusarigamajutsu | Chain and sickle |
| 8. | Rokushakubojutsu | 6ft Staff |
| 9. | Hanbojutsu- Jojutsu | 3ft.and 4ft.staff |
| 10. | Shurikenjutsu | Throwing blades |
| 11. | Kishajutsu | Archery from horseback |
| 12. | Intonjutsu | Disappearing techniques |
| 13. | Hokojutsu | Walking methods |
| 14. | Hensojutsu | Disguise and impersonation |
| 15. | Kakushi Bukijutsu | Secret weapons (including shuko, etc) |
| 16. | Ninyakujutsu | Medicines and drugs |
| 17. | Gunryaku Heiho | Battle tactics |
| 18. | Tenmon & Chimon | Strategies of heaven and earth |

Mentioned in the list of Soke (or Jonin - meaning head of family) in the Iga Ryu is the famed Momochi Sandayu in the Tensho era 1573- 1591.

Iga province is known today as Mie-ken (Mie Prefecture)

Listed below are the Ninja Ryu that are known to have existed in Iga:

Iga Ryu, ***Kumogakure Ryu***, ***Gyokko Ryu***, Rikyoku Ryu, Tsuji-Ichimu Ryu, Hattori Ryu, Taki Ryu, Yoshimori Ryu, Uchikawa Ryu, ***Gikan Ryu***, Hakuun Ryu, ***Togakure Ryu***, Takino Ryu, Sawa Ryu, Gen Ryu, Momochi Ryu, Genjitsu Ryu, Ryumon Ryu, Tento-happo Ryu, Goton-juppo Ryu, Kadono Ryu.

# HATTORI RYU

The Hattori Ryu, Momochi Ryu, and Fujibayashi Ryu, were all descended from Otomo no Saijin, who himself was a leading member of one of Japan's highest ranking families. As the Hattori and Momochi families were all commoners, they used the same Mon (coat of arms). The Momochi and Fujibayashi were also very prominent within the Ninja schools of Iga.

Iga Heinaizaemon no jo Ienaga, founder of Kumogakure ryu, was the head of the Hattori family at one time and gave permission for his sons to start their own lineages. The eldest, Hattori Heitaro Koreyuki, called his family 'Kamihattori'; the middle son, Hattori Heijiro Yasuyori, named his 'Nakahattori'; the youngest, Hattori Heijiro Yasunori, called his family 'Shimohattori'. Generations earlier the Hattori family were originally from China, and were the warlords of many provinces.

In 1567, Oda Nobunaga attacked the Iga province. The three Hattori families, Kami, Naka, and Shimo, were almost destroyed. Only 80 members of these three powerful families survived. As Iga was no longer safe the three branches of the Hattori family dispersed to different areas of Japan.

Hattori Masanari and his son Hanzo of the Kamihattori, swore allegiance to Tokugawa Ieyasu (Hanzo held the rank of "Shinobi Metsuke", and he had served Ieyasu's grandfather Matsudaira Kiyoyasu). Later, Hanzo, with a friend who was a Koga Ninja (Shiro Tarao), helped Tokugawa Ieyasu flee across Japan. This all helped the Tokugawa succeed as Shoguns. The Hattori were not "Watari Ninja" (Ninja who moved around from one Daimyo to another)as many others were. They were loyal to the Tokugawa and remained in their service for many generations.

Hanzo learned his martial arts, including Ninjutsu, from his father when he was a child. He virtually grew up in the practice and tradition of the martial arts. Today in the province of Kawauchi the name Hanzo is still widely in use. In his later years Hanzo was also known as "Hanzo the great Lancer" (Yari no Hanzo). In fact he had become so famous that in Mikawa province songs were written about him.

At one time Hanzo had over 200 Ninja working with him, each holding the rank of Doshin. Sometime later in his life he became a monk. Some say that Hanzo Hattori met his death on 4th December 1596, while trying to bring the Ninja of the Fuma Ryu to justice.

# MOMOCHI RYU

Apart from being a famous Ninja leader, Momochi Sandayu was also a Soke of Koto Ryu Koppojutsu and Gyokko Ryu, which are two of the ryu within the Bujinkan system today.

In the war between the northern and the southern courts of Japan the Ninja fought for the Kitabataka, Kusunoki, and Nawa armies.

In the period 1573-1591 the village of Ryugu Sanbonmatsu, in Yamato, was founded under the rule of the Daimyo Kitabatake Tomonari. It was here at Sanbonmatsu that Momochi and his surviving men hid after the invasion of Iga, on the day Oda Nobunaga was killed by his senior general Akechi. The Momochi family gained fame during this rebellion, which is known as "Tensho no Ran."

# INVASION OF IGA

Until the 1580's the Iga province had been ruled by the Nikki-han (Nikki family), who held a great respect for the ninja and their skills. They gave them little trouble, letting them live as they wished. The Iga ninja even had the freedom to sell their skills across all of Japan, without provocation from the Nikki. Another major Samurai family here was the Kitabatake. They, like the Nikki, respected the ninja, and left them alone.

The recorded historical chronicle of "Iga no Ran" (Iga revolt) starts in 1579 with the story of a Samurai called Shimoyama Kai-no-kami who went to visit Oda Nobuo in Ise to make a complaint about the Samurai in his province (Iga). Kitabatake Tomonori had previously built a castle in Iga at a place called Maruyama hoping that one day he could control the Iga province. Maruyama is sited 180 metres above Hijiki river. Records show that Nobuo had promoted Takigawa Saburohei to the rank of "Fushin-Bugyu" (Building Commissioner) and ordered him to rebuild the castle at Maruyama, so there was a lot of activity going on at this time. Nobuo used his own ninja to keep watch and protect the castle during reconstruction. The ninja of Iga of course obtained jobs at the castle as labourers, and mapped the castle's weak points for future use.

Iga ninja and samurai together both attacked the castle before it was completed, using the information that the Iga ninja had spent months collecting. Takigawa was forced to retreat. After the battle, the ninja and samurai of Iga all collaborated to destroy Maruyama castle. (It is thought that many members from the Koga ninja ryu also helped in the information gathering, battle, and destruction of Maruyama castle.) Needless to say, Oda was upset.
In 1581, two years after Maruyama was destroyed, Oda launched another offensive against the ninja and samurai of Iga. The invasion of Iga province was finally mounted on six fronts. In total the offensive had in excess of over 47,000 samurai and foot soldiers (commoners).

The Iga ninja gathered in two places for this battle: the Heiraku-ji, a temple on a hill in the middle of Iga Ueno (Ueno castle now stands on this site), and Tendoyama, where Maruyama castle once stood. They also recruited help from ninja in the Koga province as well.

The Iga ninja, though brave, didn't have much chance against this kind of offensive. They were totally slaughtered. The three Hattori families split up and escaped to three different parts of Japan, many other families were totally wiped out, and much of Iga was burnt to the ground.

# KOGA RYU NINJUTSU

During the Tenkyo era (938 - 946) Mochizuki Saburo Kaneie, the 3rd son of Suwa Saemon Minamoto Shigeyori (a lord in the province of Shimano) fought against the Taira. This was mainly against Taira no Masakado, who had led a revolt. For his bravery during the battle he was given a section of land in the Koga region, which is southwest of Omi province in central Japan (not to the east as most books locate it). Following Samurai custom, he changed his name to Koga Omi no kami Kaneie. His son Omi no Kami Iechika studied Genjutsu from a Buddhist priest called Tatsumaki Hoshi. Iechika lived in Otaki no Sho, Tatsumaki lived in Koga. This is the possible origin of the Koga Ryu of Ninjutsu.

Remnants of the Nambuko era (1330's) from the North and South Imperial Courts fled to the various regions of Japan, but mainly to the Koga and the Iga regions. It was some of these people that helped create the Koga Ryu, which eventually grew to 53 families. Of these 53 families eight were the strongest and of the highest rank. These eight senior families were the Koga, Mochizuki, Ugai, Naiki, Akutagawa, Ueno, Kadono, and Nagano. These were called the strong eight. They also included the Hiryugumi and Hakuryugumi, as they too were masters of Ninjutsu.

Each of the different family ryu-ha at some time or another in history created a ninja of skill and prominence. The following are some of the ryu-ha with their most famous members:

**Hiryugumi** (Hiryu group) said to come from Koga: Katuragi Tango no kami, Miyajima Gyubun no suke, Yamanaka Juro, Heishi Mondo no suke, Saga Echizen no kami.

**Hakuryugumi** (Hakuryu group) said to be from Koga: Kiyama Shika no suke, Wada Iga no kami, Uda Tonai, Sugitani Yotoji, Oki Ukontaro, Akutagawa Sakyomaru.

**Tachibana Hachitengu Gumi**: Endo Mushanosuke, Sekiguci Genjuro, Kounishi TomogoKido Yamato no Kuni.

**Kawachi Yon Tengu Ryu** : Tatsumi Jiro, Honda Chikuzen no kami, Shinno Kuranosuke

Later three other families came into the limelight of Ninjutsu in the Koga region: the Ugai, Naiki, and Akutagawa. Together, including the Mochizuki, these four ryus were in the forefront of the Koga tradition of Ninjutsu.

From 1449- 1451 five successors are recorded for the five ninja ryu. These are: Koga Saburo, Mochizuki Goro, Ugai Ryuhoshi, Naiki Fujibe, and Akutagawa Kazuma. Akutagawa was in the spearhead of the Sasaki army, which defeated the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshihisa in a rebellion called "Maganari no Jin".

The Sasaki family were the Daimyo (lords) of the Koga region, and employed several of the ninja families.The ninja Jonin (heads of family) that worked for the Sasaki family between 1487- 89 were Mochizuki Yajiro, Ugai Senshu, Nakai Gohyoe, Akutagawa Tenpei, and Koga Saburo II.

On June 5th, 1570, Sasaki Jotei called ninja from both the Iga Ryu and the Koga Ryu to meet on the banks of the river Yashu for a final battle with Oda Nobunaga. Koga samurai also came. They received intensive training from the ninja in the battle strategies of Ninjutsu. With this training also came lessons on ninja ethics and honor. Although they were samurai, they were not afraid to use what some thought were the unethical attitudes of the ninja.

The Sasaki army was divided up into three different ranks according to skills. Four ninja groups led the first wave: the Mikumo, Takanose, Mizuhara, and Inui Ryu. The second wave consisted of ninja from the other 53 families, and finally the third wave contained the Sasaki samurai, along with some Koga ninja. In reserve were 3000 samurai from the Tanemura, Niimura, and Kawai families.

During the battle, Mikumo Iyo no Kami, a samurai who was in charge of one of the sections on the Sasaki side changed over to Oda's army, betraying and attacking the Sasaki army from behind. As a result of this the Sasaki were defeated and only just managed to escape without capture.

Tanemura Ihachiro, a Koga Ninja Jonin for many years, taught ninjutsu history and techniques to a writer named Gingetsu who later wrote a book entitled "Ninjutsu no Gokui". The techniques described in this book are similar to the techniques from the Togakure Ryu from the Iga Ryu.

# 19TH CENTURY NINJA

By the 19th century the ninja of both Iga and Koga had been reduced to doing nothing more than police work. Many of the ryu that had survived the massacre 3000 years before had faded away into nothing as a result of the peace that was brought about by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1601.

Between 1854 and 1859 some of the Iga ninja cooperated with the Royalist army and joined a troop of court patrolmen. They caused a large amount of disruption for the Shinsen Gumi (Shinsen group), who were the ninja bodyguard for the Tokugawa Shogunate.

In 1863 many ninja joined the Tenchigumi, a group mostly made up of ninja extremists. Their leaders were Yoshimura and Fujimoto Tesseki. They tried to rise up against the Tokugawa Shoguns but their numbers were no match for the large numbers of the Shogun's samurai, and many were killed. Ten years later in the Restoration War, ninja joined both armies and distinguished themselves in the numerous battles both for, and against, the Emperor. During the battle of Toba, Fushimi ninja troops very effectively displayed their skills on the battlefield.

At the battle of Tenchigumi a member of a Koppojutsu Ryu (Gikan Ryu) was wounded while fighting for the Emperor. He retreated to a nearby temple and was found by a ninja who was a member of the Kukishinden Ryu (see chapter 7) whose name was Ishitani Matsutaro.

Apart from Ishitani, only one other ninja continued to teach and keep Ninjutsu alive. This was Toda Shinryuken Masamitsu, a Soke of the Togakure Ryu.

History

# Bujinkan Tradition of Soke Hatsumi's Lineage – 9 Schools of the Bujinkan -

***Soke Hatsumi received these nine traditions from the late O'Sensei Takamatsu written in a special scroll designating Masaaki Hatsumi as the inheritor of these traditions. Soke Hatsumi has combined these 9 schools into what he calls the Bujinkan Dojo, now headquartered in Noda city, Japan.***

## Togakure Ryu Ninjutsu - 34th Soke

Originally Founded by Daosuke Togakure in about 1160

## Gyokko Ryu Koshijutsu - 28th Soke

Originally Founded by Cho Gyokko, a Chinese Lady Martial Artist in about 600

## Koto Ryu Koppojutsu - 18th Soke

Originally Founded by Sandayu Momochi from the art of Gyokko Ryu

## Takagi Yoshin Ryu Jutaijutsu - 17th Soke

Originally Founded by Oriuemon Shigenobu Takagi in the 1600's

## Kukishinden Ryu Happo Hikenjutsu - 28th Soke

Originally Founded by Izumo Kanja Yoshiteru

## Shinden Fudo Ryu Dakentaijutsu - 26th Soke

Originally Founded by Izumo Kanja Yoshiteru

## Gikan Ryu Koppojutsu - 15th Soke

Originally Founded by Sonyu Hangan Gikanbo in about 1570

## Kumogakure Ryu Ninpo - 14th Soke

Originally Founded by Heinaizaemon Ienaga Iga, who adapted the name Kumogakure Hoshi

## Gyokushin Ryu Ninpo - 21st Soke

Associated with Gyokko and Gikan Ryus

*"Violence is to be avoided"*
*"Use the sword to be peaceful, and protect country, family, and nature".*

## SPECIALTIES-

***Ninpo, Katana, Ninpo taijutsu, Shuko and Ashiko, Bisento, Sakkijutsu, Metsubushi, Shinodake, Senban shuriken, Kyoketsu Shoge (thought to be developed before the Kusarigama), Saakijutsu***

THREE SECRETS OF TOGAKURE RYU

**1. SENBAN SHURIKEN**
A four pointed throwing star, the design of which is exclusively unique to the Togakure Ninja.

**2. SHUKO**
Also known as Tekagi. These are metal bands around the palm of the hand with four metal spikes projecting from the palm; another metal band is around the wrist. A piece of leather joins the two metal bands together. This was a climbing tool, and also used in defense against sword attacks. To use the shuko correctly you must master the Koshijutsu from Gyokko Ryu.

**3. SHINDAKE**
This is a small, short bamboo tube 4 foot long (1 .20m) used to aid breathing when hiding under water. It was also used as a blowpipe. Sometimes a broken scabbard was used for this purpose.

These three items were known as "**SANPO HIDEN**" (Three secret ways).

On New Year's Day in 1891 Soke Toda Shinryuken wrote the following wisdom...

1. Know the **wisdom** of being patient during times of inactivity.
2. Choose the course of **Justice** as the path of your life.
3. Do not allow your **heart** to be controlled by the demands of desire, pleasure, or pain.
4. Sorrow, pain, and resentment are natural qualities to be found in life. Therefore, work to cultivate an **immovable spirit**.
5. Hold in your heart the importance of family loyalty, and pursue the literary and the martial arts with a balanced **determination**.

The Gyokko Ryu is broken down into five levels:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ki Gata | 5 techniques |
| Torite Kihon Gata | 10 techniques |
| Jo Ryaku no Maki | 12 techniques |
| Chu Ryaku no Maki | 8 techniques |
| Ge Ryaku no Maki | 8 techniques |

The Kihon Happo is made from the first two levels of the Gyokko Ryu (the basic techniques of the school), the Ki Gata and Torite Kihon Gata. Powerful blocks and balance taking are typical in this ryu, the preference being to block by hitting with the knuckles to the muscle areas since the school specializes in techniques that involve Kosshijutsu (attack against muscles) and Shitojutsu (use of thumbs and fingers). The Kosshijutsu is possibly based on Chinese Kenpo. Kosshijutsu actually means "to knock down the enemy with one finger". The kanji for 'kosshi' could also be read as "backbone", as if kosshijutsu is the backbone of martial arts.

There is a saying in the Gyokko Ryu, "Bushigokoro wo motte totoshi no nasu" (The warrior's heart is precious, and

*The Gyokko Ryu has a rule, "Destroy the enemy's power, but leave his life". It states that when a fight is about to start, do not let the opponent win, but take him down with a technique that is only as strong as is needed to match the situation.*

## The following are nine rules of the Gyokko Ryu:

1) The character "nin" means to guard the nation with one's life.
2) Forget the self, be patient, and do not fear dying.
3) When in danger say or show nothing.
4) As a strong enemy comes, keep an indomitable spirit.
5) Serve and protect the master as you must your own parents.
6) Vices dissipate your proficiency.
7) Being drunk affects your judgment.
8) Destroy your enemy but not his life.
9) Don't teach to others without the master's permission.

# NINE SCHOOLS OF THE BUJINKAN 虎倒流骨法術

## KOTO RYU

Tiger Knocking Down School

## KOPPOJUTSU
## (Art of Bone attacking/breaking)

The name of the school, “Tiger Knocking Down”, comes from the technique of knocking down the tiger with the tips of the fingers (the Chuden Kata techniques sometimes start this way). In the old days the training started with striking sand and gravel, then moving on to large stones and rocks.

Some of the differences between Koto Ryu and Gyokko ryu are:

Koto Ryu is based on Koppojutsu (bone attacking blocks) techniques, while Gyokko Ryu is based on Koshijutsu (muscle/ organ attacks). Directionally speaking the Koto Ryu is straighter in and the Gyokko Ryu revolves more on a circular basis (either in yourself or in your opponent when taking their balance).

Koto Ryu techniques use short distancing between the two opponents, Gyokko Ryu uses greater distance. The Koto Ryu techniques are shorter, quicker, and straight to the point; the Gyokko Ryu has longer more complicated techniques and the techniques have more movement. The Koto Ryu concentrates more on striking, and the Gyokko Ryu more on locks and throws. If both schools are studied completely the student will know all forms of fighting, including distance, striking, throws, and locks. Both schools complement each other and so to study only one is to know only half of one of the two schools.

### Typical movement within the Koto Ryu is:

**1.** Yoko Aruki (cross stepping), and stamping on toes (Toki).
**2.** Using short distancing, and striking hard.
**3.** Always making the eyes appear blank so that no telepathic movement can be detected by the opponent - a saying in the Koto Ryu is that the eyes are everything.
**4.** Looking at the eyebrows of the opponent.

## The Koto Ryu is broken down into five levels which are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Kurai Dori | Five Kamae. |
| 2. Shoden no Kata | Eighteen techniques. |
| 3. Chuden no Kata | Twelve techniques. |
| 4. Okuden no Kata | Twelve techniques. |
| 5. Hekito no Kata | Eight techniques. |

The ***Kukishin Ryu*** uses the following in its system:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bo | Shuriken | Hi (Fire) | Taijutsu |
| Ken | Kusarigama | Mizu (Water) | Naginata |

Kukishinden Ryu has its roots from the Kukishin Ryu and there are many different branches of the Kukishinden Ryu and the Kukishin Ryu.

Takamatsu Sensei was most know for this school and even helped the Kuki family restore their densho that was lost or damaged in the war. Among the teachings of the Kukishinden Ryu is the ability to overcome an opponent from a distance, called Taoke no jutsu.
The Kukishinden Ryu is known both as Happo Hikenjutsu and Happo Bikenjutsu- it is the same thing. The Bikenjutsu is the heading for a group that is made up of Kenjutsu, Kodachi, and Jutte. Juttejutsu is an important part of the Bikenjutsu and it also includes Tessenjutsu. It is very important that taijutsu is mastered before the jutte can be used effectively.
This school excels especially in its use of the sword. Because the Kuki Suigun (navy) used swords on ships, the lowered posture that gave better balance on a rolling ship became the basic way of sword for this ryu.

The secret principle of Shindenfudo Ryu is the *Principle of Nature*.
This ryu originated by Genpachiro Tameyoshi in the mid-12th century. It is traced back to the Kosshijutsu which was introduced by Izumo Kanja Yoshiteru. A characteristic of this ryu can be found in its recognition of natural style as the only posture of defense. However, in reality, a person imagines a posture of defense in his mind and places himself on guard.

The Shindenfudo Ryu has two styles of taijutsu: Dakentaijutsu, and Jutaijutsu. In the Dakentaijutsu there are no formal kamae and the use of natural posture is emphasized, while in the Jutaijutsu there are 5 kamae.

Hojojutsu (the art of rope tying) is also taught in this ryu-ha. It is used alongside the taijutsu to help restrain the opponent. This school uses several different types of Yari, Ono (war axe), O-Tsuchi (war hammers), and Naginata.

The training levels in the Dakentaijutsu are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ten no kata | 8 kata |
| Chi no kata | 8 kata |
| Shizen Shikoku no kata | 12 kata |

The training levels in the Jutaijutsu are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Kamae | 5 kamae |
| Shoden no kata | 16 kata |
| Chuden no kata | 11 kata |
| Okuden no kata | 8 kata |

"High Tree, Raised Heart School"

## JUTAIJUTSU

One of this school's first originators was Umon. His father, a retainer of the Daimyo, was attacked in a dark alley one night and died a violent death. Remembering the advice that his father had always given him, "A willow is flexible, but a high tree is breakable", Umon changed his name to Takagi Oriuemon Shigenobu and avenged his father's death. He revised and improved the techniques that he had learned and put them together into what became known as "Takagi Yoshin Ryu", naming it after himself. "Yo" means willow and "shin" means heart".

The Takagi Yoshin Ryu takes its techniques further than those of Judo and Aikido. When the techniques are applied it is made as difficult as possible for your assailant to escape by rolling and breakfalling. This style of Jujutsu comes from training within a building, unlike other styles which originated outdoors. Therefore the techniques result with the opponent being thrown, locked, or held close to the body due to being inside a more confined area, instead of throwing him a distance away from you as you could outdoors. In the Takagi Yoshin Ryu you are taught to look at the eyes, and use speed. You are also trained to use your opponent's own weight and momentum against him.

THE LEVELS OF TRAINING IN TAKAGI YOSHIN RYU:

| | |
|---|---|
| Shoden no Kata | 14 techniques |
| Chuden no Sabaki Gata | 10 techniques |
| Chuden no Tai no Gata | 15 techniques |
| Okuden no Kata | 15 techniques |
| Eri Shime Gata | 8 techniques |
| Moguri Gata | 11 techniques |
| Daisho Sabaki Gata | 14 techniques |

Truth, Loyalty, and Justice School

## KOPPOJUTSU

The Makimono scrolls of Gikan Ryu have sections on the kata names, history, secret striking points (Kyusho), and strategies used by the ryu, but it has been revealed that the Makimono, when referring to techniques, only mention the names and do not contain the step by step instructions as do some other Makimono. This was done to keep the teachings of the school secret in case the scrolls were stolen. From what we understand there are no Densho in the Gikan Ryu. The whole range of kata for the ryu are taught orally.

The 5 levels of training in the Gikan Ryu are:

1. Shoden Gata
2. Chuden Gata
3. Okuden Gata
4. Kaiden Gata
5. Menkyo Kaiden

It is not known in the west what the fighting techniques of the Gyokushin Ryu are. All that is really known of techniques is that it uses sutemi throws. We also know that this school concentrated more on the espionage side of ninjutsu, rather than the fighting side. It has been said that the specialties of this ryu were the kusari fundo, ninjutsu, kosshijutsu, koppojutsu, jutaijutsu, kenjutsu and laijutsu, although we have no confirmation on this.

Gyokushin Ryu is also known for its superior use of nagenawa (using a lasso).

It is believed that Gyokushin Ryu's founder Sasaki Goemon was originally from the Gyokko Ryu or that the techniques of the Gyokushin Ryu were based on the Gyokko Ryu.

The taijutsu of Kumogakure Ryu is very similar to that of the Togakure Ryu. One of the special weapons of the ryu is the *kamayari* (hook spear). Originally designed for climbing up the sides of ships, it was also used when fighting against swordsmen. The joint between the hooks and the spear blade acts in the same principle as the jutte, trapping the incoming sword and controlling it. The hooks can be used to snare clothing or to hook the legs of an opponent running away. It was also used from above in tackling an opponent below you: the kamayari was lowered blade first, just past the opponent, and then sharply pulled back up, penetrating up into the victim's neck.

Another climbing device from this ryu is the *ippon sugi noburi* (single cedar climbing tool). This is a metal tube 25cm long, with three rows of spikes on the outside and a chain running through the middle with a metal hook at each end. This was placed around the tree and used as an aid in climbing- much the same way as modern lumberjacks use ropes or chains swung around the tree trunk. It could also be used as a flailing weapon.

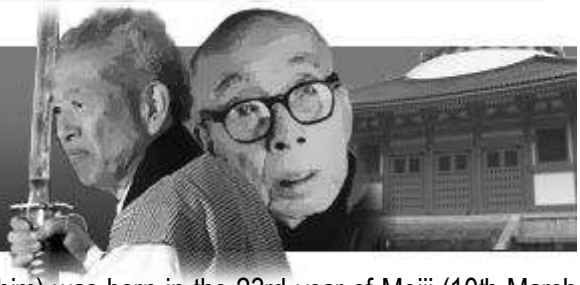
Another specialty of this ryu is the demon mask sometimes worn by members of the ryu. The Kikaku Ken or "Demon horn strike" (head butt), gives rise to another theory of the demon mask: perhaps the mask, even when not worn, gave the idea to use the head during fighting. The head is a part of the body that is rarely used in Japanese fighting systems.

In the Bujinkan Dojo a chant/mantra, *'Shiken Haramitsu Daikomyoç* is used to open and close the training sessions. It is thought that this comes from the Kumogakure Ryu and was also written in the Amatsu Tatara scrolls given to Soke Hatsumi from O'Sensei Takamatsu. It is waka (poetry), and shows the quest for enlightenment in our studies.

History

# O'SENSEI TAKAMATSU

**TOSHITSUGU TAKAMATSU** *"The last living true Ninja"*
33rd Soke of Togakure Ryu Ninjutsu



O'Sensei Takamatsu (as we at ABD call him) was born in the 23rd year of Meiji (10th March 1887), in Akashi, Hyogo province. His given name was Hisatsugu but he later changed the name (using the same kanji characters but different pronunciation) to Toshitsugu. Takamatsu was one of the greatest martial artists to ever live. He not only practiced his art, he totally lived it and victoriously fought many to-the-death battles from challengers.

He began his training at an early age. His grandfather, Toda Shinryuken Masamitsu, had a bone clinic and a Budo Dojo in Kobe. In this dojo he was the Soke of a fighting system known as Shindenfudo Ryu Jutaijutsu. Toda also taught Shinden Koto Ryu Karate (later changed to Koto Ryu Koppojutsu), Gyokko Ryu Kosshijutsu, Kumogakure Ryu Ninpo, Gyokushin Ryu Ninpo, and the Togakure Ryu Ninpo Taijutsu. Grandfather Toda was also a senior instructor in Bikenshin Ryu Kenjutsu, a school that taught the Tokugawa shoguns, as well as being a teacher at a military academy in Nakano. When he was 13 years old Takamatsu had mastered the techniques of his grandfather's school, meaning that he was to become a licensee of the school, a common practice in the past. After he learned Shindenfudo Ryu, Toda taught him the Koto Ryu and then the Togakure Ryu. Takamatsu mentioned that he found the Koto Ryu to be "fun", but he had little interest in the Togakure Ryu Ninjutsu training. Koto Ryu training involved hitting small pebbles with the finger tips. The nails and fingers would run with blood, and cause great pain. As the student progressed he would later move on to rocks, etcetera. Takamatsu's hands became like claws from this practice, which he later regretted as it interfered with his ability to paint and write poetry.

In the spring of the same year that he was 13 years old (1900), O'Sensei Takamatsu left high school to go to English School and the Chinese School of Classics in his home town of Kobe. It was while he was here that he entered the Takagi Yoshin Ryu where Mizuta Yoshitaro Tadafusa was the 15th Soke. He practiced at this dojo everyday, and when he was 17 years old, Mizuta gave him the Menkyo Kaiden to the Takagi Yoshin Ryu. This same year an old man by the name of Ishitani Matsutaro Takekage came to the match factory owned by Takamatsu's father. Ishitani was famous all over Japan for his martial arts. He was using an old oak bokken for a walking stick. Takamatsu's father gave Ishitani a job as security guard, and Ishitani was also given a small area of the factory to use as a Dojo. Takamatsu leapt at the chance to study under the old man. From him he learned the "Kuki Happo Biken no Jutsu." Ishitani also trained in various aspects of Ninjutsu and taught young Takamatsu aspects from several other schools of which he was also Soke. These were Hon Tai Takagi Yoshin Ryu (from which Takamatsu was already studying with Mizuta), Gikan Ryu Koppojutsu, and Shinden Muso Ryu.

On one occasion the sleeping area for the match factory workers caught on fire. As everyone ran around screaming, Takamatsu was observed to be smoking a cigar, watching the fire. He then got one of the thick gi training jackets, soaked it in water and put the jacket on. Grabbing a hanbo (3ft stick) he ran into the burning area and started knocking down the sliding walls with the hanbo. The collapsing walls helped extinguish the flames, saving the rest of the factory. Ishitani is reputed to have watched Takamatsu as he ran about knocking down the walls and commented that he was truly a great martial artist. Ishitani died a few years later, just moments after passing the scrolls on to O'Sensei Takamatsu. It is said that he died with his head in O'Sensei Takamatsu's lap.

Takamatsu received his Menkyo Kaiden from Toda in 1909 when he was 22 years old. Toda died that same year on the 6th December, 1909. He had once told Takamatsu, "Even when you are faced with death, die laughing". Other pieces of advice he had given him were: "Even when you are standing in front of defeat, do it smiling," and "Never talk about your knowledge, it might make it disappear."

A short time after this Takamatsu left for China. One of the reasons he gave for his decision to leave was that he wished to test his training and this was no longer possible tightly controlled Japan. On his first trip to China Takamatsu went via Korea, and studied there under Kim Kei-mei. He later mastered up to eighteen Chinese and Korean martial arts. While in China he fought in several battles. In one of these battles a mounted soldier was charging at him. Takamatsu was at this point not armed, but a sword lay on the ground before him. As the horseman started to draw a pistol intending to shoot, Takamatsu ran forward, did a dive roll, picked up the sword, and sprang into the air cutting off the man's head. He later told his students that it is of the greatest importance to be able to roll correctly in as many different ways as possible.

To survive in China, Takamatsu taught martial arts. He told Hatsumi that at one point when he was at an English school he had over 1000 students. Many senior martial artists came to fight him. In the past you had to accept challenges from others - accepting was the only way to keep up your credibility as a martial artist and as a teacher. He fought every challenger and never lost a single fight, although some were declared draws. Takamatsu's diary states that he fought 12 fights to the death, and 7 competition matches. The death fights were all results of challenges. All of these things had occurred by the time he had attained the grand old age of 30. He returned to Japan in 1919 and sometime after this went to the Tendai temple on Mt. Hiei, in Kyoto, and was ordained as a priest. Later he became one of the abbots of this temple. Although he said that he was not a religious person, he was very much attuned to spirit and it is possible that he was ordained in a total of three different religions. Some other facts we know regarding his life are that his wife was called Tane and she was born on 28th June Meiji 30 (1896) on the river side of Yodo-gawa, in the area called Hirakata. Also we know that he was an adviser on the movie "Shinobi no mono" which was made by Daiei. He taught Bojutsu to some of the actors in the movie. And, in his later life, Takamatsu ran a small tea house and hotel in Kashiwara, Nara, Japan. It was here that he taught a few students Ninjutsu. In the 1950's, Takamatsu took on a new student called Hatsumi Yoshiaki, a young man in his 20's. Hatsumi traveled 15 hours almost every weekend for 15 years to study with O'Sensei. Soke Hatsumi said that when he first met Takamatsu he was frightened of him, that he was a very powerful and frightening teacher. Ishizuka Tetsuja, one of Hatsumi's students (now a 13th Dan Shihan in the Hombu Bujinkan Dojo in Japan) says the same thing. He tells the story of when he first met Takamatsu. Hatsumi took several students to meet and train with his teacher. Until Takamatsu came into the dojo Hatsumi conducted the training. Just before Takamatsu arrived, Hatsumi told his students to kneel in seiza, facing the Kamiza (dojo shrine). The door was behind them and as Takamatsu Sensei entered the room, Ishizuka remembers that a cold chill came over his body and he felt frightened.

One year before his death, Takamatsu told Hatsumi that he had taught him everything that he knew.
Once toward the end of his training with Takamatsu, Hatsumi saw him stumble and fall onto one knee. Hatsumi Sensei has said that it was then that he realized that perhaps Takamatsu's life was drawing to an end.

Takamatsu said to his other students, "I decided to leave everything in the hands of Hatsumi. I think he is the most suitable person in martial arts. I am now able to repay Toda Sensei, Ishitani Sensei, and Mizuta Sensei for their kindness. I intend to continue my studies into the secrets of nature".
Takamatsu Sensei died very shortly thereafter on 2nd April 1972, at the age of 85. Though he had stopped training at 80, he had still continued to oversee Hatsumi's personal training. He is buried in the Kumedra cemetery near Nara.

Hatsumi was now the official Soke. He formed what we now know as the Bujinkan which encompasses the teachings of all nine traditions passed on to him by Takamatsu Sensei. Hatsumi Soke created his own dojo with his own set of rules.

**Dr. Masaaki Hatsumi, Grandmaster**

Inheriting Soke of 9 Ninjutsu Traditions and Founder of the Bujinkan Dojo. Born in Noda City, Chiba Prefecture on December 2, 1931. Warrior names: Yoshikai, Tetzusan, Hisamune. Grandmaster Hatsumi is the founder and International Director of the Bujinkan Dojo with its Hombu Dojo, the Bujinden (Divine Palace), residing in Noda City, Chiba Prefecture, Japan and has an administration office attached to his downtown home. He is married to his lovely wife, Mariko, a famous Japanese dance teacher and 10th dan director of women's training for the Bujinkan. Dr. Hatsumi is the inheritor of nine Ninjutsu traditions from the late O'Sensei Toshitsugu Takamatsu (the last true living Ninja) in the early 1970's just before Soke Takamatsu's passing in 1972. It is said that Dr. Hatsumi was the only one receiving in-depth training with the great Takamatsu during the last 15 years of his life.

He graduated from Meiji University in Tokyo, with a major in theater studies, and osteopathic medicine (bone doctor). Soon after graduation he opened a bone clinic in his home town and his practice continued on a steady basis until about 1990 when his travel and movie schedule seemed to take over all his time. Grandmaster Hatsumi is the author of over a dozen books and 40+ video tapes on the art of Ninjutsu. He has been featured in almost every magazine relating to this subject in Japan, and throughout the entire world. He has authored countless magazine and newspaper articles on Ninjutsu and on living a productive life. He wrote, directed and acted in 50 episodes of a television series called 'Jiraya' which was the number one watched kid's program in Japan. He is now what is called a historiographer of martial arts for various plays and movies, acting as a consultant to ensure that what is being portrayed is done correctly based on true history.

He is a past President of the Writers Guild of Japan. He is sought out as a speaker and television personality in Japan. He is an accomplished musician and singer who plays guitar and ukulele. For several years he played night clubs in a Hawaiian band as a singer and musician. The walls of his 3 story brick home display an elaborate collection of signed photos from presidents and leaders of many countries around the world, along with awards, certificates, and honorary degrees from some of the most elite organizations in the world. Among them are Honorary Doctorate degrees from the USA in Human Sciences and Philosophy, Honorary Texas Ranger, Title of Knighthood from Germany, BlackBelt Magazine's Instructor of the Year, and Honorable Citizenship from the state of Texas and cities of Los Angeles, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Dublin, Ireland, etcetera. In 2000 Soke was awarded Japan's highest honor, the Cultural Award, by the Emperor of Japan for his worldwide martial arts contributions. The list is long and grows every month as he travels around the world teaching at international Tai Kai events hosted by senior Bujinkan students in their countries.

## MARTIAL ARTS BACKGROUND

Young Hatsumi was 7 years old when he first held his father's wooden sword and took up training in the martial ways. That Bokken training blade was made of biwa wood, and his father was very proud of it. That was in the late 1930's and that day became the inspiration of his martial arts life. As a young boy growing up he deeply involved himself in training in the martial arts of Japan. It was his love and passion. He studied everything he could, Judo, Kendo, Karate, Aikido, OKINAWAN Karate (Zen-Bei Butokukai) and Jukendo (rifle and bayonet combat). By the time he was 20 years old he had obtained the rank of 4th degree black belt in Judo. In 1951 this was a very high rank and rare for such a young student of the arts. This proves his dedication and perseverance since he tested against those much older and bigger than he. He found Judo to be sport oriented.

After the war years he took a break from martial arts for awhile. During his late teenage years he trained in western style boxing, continued playing soccer, and worked hard at his academic studies. Missing the dojo world of training he so loved and immersed himself into as a youth, he again returned to martial arts. He kept looking for something; he was not quite sure what it was but it seemed to be missing in his life. Eventually he found himself at the door step of a man who would change his life and someday renew the world of martial arts, Master Toshitsugu Takamatsu, the last of the true Ninja. Master Takamatsu took Hatsumi under his wing during the last 15 years of his life, taught him the Nine secret traditions and

passed them on to him as the sole heir. Today these studies have become what we know of as the Bujinkan Dojo. Grandmaster Hatsumi has granted Shidoshi Van Donk full permission and authority to represent his Ninjutsu / Budo Taijutsu art outside of Japan. Therefore the American Bujinkan Dojo was formed and now offers the teachings of Grandmaster Hatsumi to the general public.

# Soke Masaaki Hatsumi's Traditions:

Togakure Ryu Ninpo Happo Hiken
34th Grandmaster

Gyokko Ryu Kosshijutsu Happo Hiken
28th Grandmaster

Koto Ryu Koppojutsu Happo Hiken
18th Grandmaster

Shinden Fudo Ryu Daken Taijutsu Happo Hiken
26th Grandmaster

Kukishin Ryu Taijutsu Happo Hiken
28th Grandmaster

Takagiyoshin Ryu Jutaijutsu Happo Hiken
17th Grandmaster

Kumogakure Ryu Ninpo Happo Hiken
14th Grandmaster

Gyokushin Ryu Ninpo Happo Hiken
21st Grandmaster

Gikan Ryu Koppojutsu Happo Hiken
15th Grandmaster